

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01

USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 MC-02 AID-05 /035 W

----- 025725

R 221935Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6021

INFO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 5900

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PE

SUBJ: PERUVIAN AIR FORCE GIVES FIREPOWER DEMONSTRATION

1. THE PERUVIAN AIR FORCE STAGED A SPECTACULAR AIR SHOW AND FIREPOWER DEMONSTRATION SUNDAY JULY 20 IN HONOR OF MILITARY AVIATION WEEK.

2. THE DEMONSTRATION, WHICH TOOK PLACE ALONG COAST NEAR THE CHORRILLOS AREA OF LIMA, WAS WITNESSED BY SEVERAL THOUSAND PEOPLE, INCLUDING FOUR CABINET MINISTERS, AND BROADCAST ON NATIONAL TELEVISION. AIR MINISTER GILARDI TOLD REPORTERS ITS PURPOSE WAS "TO ENTERTAIN THE PUBLIC AND LET THEM KNOW THE POWER OF THEIR AIR FORCE". HE ALSO SAID THAT THEY WOULD OBSERVE "WHAT (THE AIR FORCE) COULD DO TO SMOTHER ANY PROBLEM THAT MIGHT ARISE ON EITHER THE INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL FRONT."

3. THE FIREPOWER DEMONSTRATION LASTED ABOUT 45 MINUTES AND FEATURED APPROXIMATELY 32 AIRCRAFT, INCLUDING MIRAGES, F-86S, A-37BS, T-37S, CAMBERRAS AND RANGER HELICOPTERS. THE TACTICAL AIRCRAFT ATTACKED 14 SMALL TARGET VESSELS, ANCHORED IN THREE CLUSTERS, WITH MACHINEGUNS, ROCKETS AND NAPALM. THE VESSELS WERE ALSO ATTACKED BY PERUVIAN-MANUFACTURED SURFACE-TO-SURFACE MISSILES FIRED FROM A SHORE BATTERY. THE DEMONSTRATION CLOSED WITH AN AIRDROP OF ABOUT FIFTY PARATROOPERS.

4. THE EMBASSY HAS LEARNED THAT ONE OF THE MIRAGE AIRCRAFT
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CRASHED INTO THE SEA DURING THE COURSE OF THE DEMONSTRATION; THE

PILOT APPARENTLY EJECTED SAFELY. LIMA PRESS, WHICH GAVE WIDE COVERAGE TO AIR SHOW, FAILED TO MENTION FALLEN MIRAGE.

5. COMMENT: THE EMBASSY'S AIR ATTACHE CREDITS THE PERUVIAN AIR FORCE WITH A GENERALLY COMPETENT PERFORMANCE. WE FEEL ITS PURPOSE WAS APTLY SUMMED UP BY AIR MINISTER GILARDI'S PRESS COMMENTS. SINCE THE DEMONSTRATION TOOK PLACE DURING MILITARY AVIATION WEEK, IT NEED NOT BE SEEN AS A PROVOCATION BY THE CHILEANS.

DEAN

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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